



## NEWS RELEASE

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*Editor's Note: Photos attached, Nebraska Teacher of the Year and Awards of Excellence winners.*

## LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER NAMED NEBRASKA TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Amber Vlasnik, a math teacher at Lincoln High School, was named Nebraska 2017 Teacher of the Year today during a surprise award presentation.

Nebraska Commissioner of Education Matt Blomstedt presented the award.

Vlasnik was one of three finalists for Nebraska Teacher of the Year. The following teachers were finalists and will be recognized as Awards of Excellence winners:

- Charla Brant of Longfellow Elementary in Hastings
- Kimberly Shevlin of Columbus Middle School in Columbus

Vlasnik has taught math at Lincoln High since 2011. Prior to that, she taught at Lincoln Southeast High School in Lincoln and Albright Middle School in Houston, Texas. In addition to her classroom experience, Vlasnik has served as the Lincoln High Math Department Chair since 2014. Vlasnik wrote in her Teacher of the Year application that her teaching approach includes "collaboration and positivity while decreasing variability."

"Teachers grow as professionals when they are given opportunities to come alongside each other to improve student learning," she wrote. She said that although teaching can be difficult at times, she has a network of professionals who bring a wealth of ideas and knowledge to the classroom. "Together, we are engaging students in meaningful learning and are helping them to realize their potential."

Vlasnik is a seven-year veteran teacher who earned a Bachelor's Degree (Magna Cum Laude) from the University of Nebraska-Kearney and a Master's Degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). She is currently pursuing a Doctoral Degree in Educational Studies from UNL.

A panel of Nebraska educators selected Vlasnik as the 2017 Nebraska Teacher of the Year. The Teacher of the Year program recognizes the contributions of classroom teachers who are exceptionally dedicated, knowledgeable and skilled and who have the ability to inspire students of all backgrounds and abilities to learn.

Vlasnik and the Awards of Excellence winners will be honored by the State Board of Education at a November luncheon.

Vlasnik will participate in the National Teacher of the Year competition later this year.